PLYMOUTH STATE UNIVERSITY

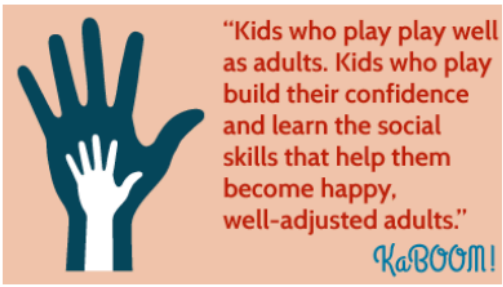
ER 2155: Play and Learning in Early Childhood

Spring 2022

Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:00-11:40am in Rounds 103

Compassion & Understanding

We are living in a pandemic. Compassion and understanding will be at the heart of everything we do this semester. Any member of our learning community, at any time, might be affected by the pandemic. Keeping this in mind, we will need to be flexible and supportive. The current syllabus and calendar will change when we see a need to respond to our community of learners.



Professor Contact Information
Dr. Elisabeth Johnston

Office- Rounds 030
Email- epjohnston@plymouth.edu
Phone- 603-535-3128
Pronouns- she/her/hers



Dr. Elisabeth Johnston

Play and Learning in Early Childhood is a Wellness Connection course; part of the **General Education Program** at Plymouth State University.

What are children's perspectives about play?

View this short video clip to hear from several children from Ireland about their thoughts about play. Children's Perspective on Play

Student Drop-In Office Hours

These are times when you will know I am free.

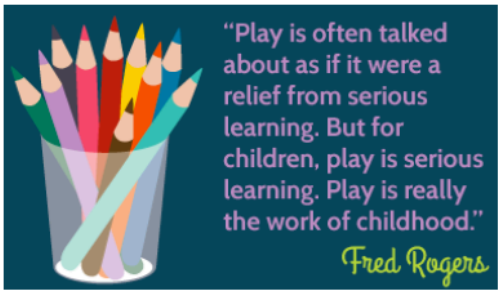
*Office Hours- Rounds 030 or via Zoom (Please email me if you want to meet on Zoom.)

- Mondays and Wednesdays 2:15-3:15pm
- Thursdays 1:00-3:00pm

But these are not the only times I am available. We can also set up an appointment to meet.

There are many reasons to drop in during office hours or to make an appointment.

- To introduce yourself and chat
- To ask questions about a class or PSU
- To get clarification about something from class
- To talk about a course topic that interests you
- Whatever—**please don't hesitate to come by or make an appointment!**



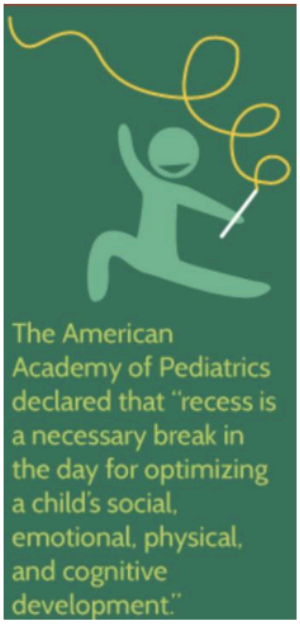
Course Description for ER 2155

Focuses on the essential importance of play for young children's learning and development. Introduces key theories about the nature and purposes of play. Examines the developmental progression of play from birth through age 8, characteristics of play, and types of play. Explores environments, materials, and interactions that promote children's play. Considers threats to play and ways in which early childhood educators can be effective advocates for play. Students have opportunities to explore and play with materials in class as well as to observe and promote children's play in early childhood settings. Falls. (WECO)

LEARNING GOALS

These learning goals identify what you will know and be able to do as a result of successfully completing this course:

1. Describe the characteristics of free play, guided play, and playful learning;
2. Articulate Piaget's and Vygotsky's theories about how play influences learning and development, as well as Parten's continuum of social participation in play; (WECO)
3. Discuss how young children learn through play across the age span from birth through 8;
4. Articulate the ways in which play benefits development in all domains—physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language; (WECO)
5. Describe how various types of play—sensory play, art play, block play, tinkering and constructive play, pretend play, physical play, big body play, outdoor play, and media play—promote children's learning;
6. Describe environments and adult interactions that promote children's play; (WECO)
7. Identify and select materials to support and enhance play; (WECO)
8. Identify threats to play and ways to address these challenges;
9. Identify and consider ethical issues and responsibilities related to children's play;
10. Advocate to protect and promote play;
11. Describe how you use the Habits of Mind in your play and when engaging in the course activities.



WELLNESS CONNECTION

To be fully educated, people need respect for and understanding of how physical activity, and wellness contribute to mental acuity and emotional well-being. Awareness of and attention to the physical can enhance the cognitive and emotional aspects of life.

Students take a three or four credit Wellness (WECO) course (either within the major or not) designed to increase their understanding of the connection between mind and body.

These courses expose students to the theory and practice of life-span wellness and fitness activity, and to the knowledge, attitudes, habits, and skills needed to live well. Their goal is to help students cultivate life skills, which will promote mental, physical, and emotional well-being.

Throughout the syllabus you will find the WECO designation next to elements that provide significant opportunities to consider play's connection to wellness as described above.

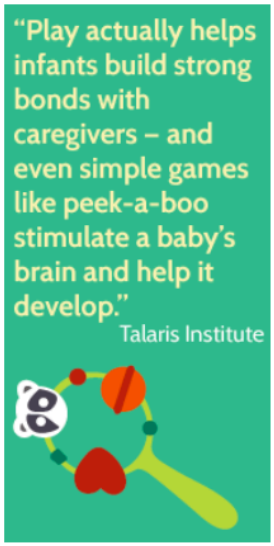
COURSE READINGS

Play and Learning in Early Childhood Education by Elisabeth Johnston is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License, except where otherwise noted.

We will use this Open Educational Resource (OER) this semester to learn about play in early childhood education. These readings will help us discuss play during our class sessions and reflect about children's play (and our play) both inside and outside of class.

Each chapter of the book focuses on a topic that we will explore together this semester. You will see that there will be times when you have choice in what you read. This will allow flexibility in how you approach your learning this semester. Also, it will provide opportunities for us to gain new perspectives about play from each other as well as construct deeper understandings as we discuss young children's play.

Being an OER, we can decide to edit this book at any point in the semester. This flexibility will allow us to add new readings or topics of interest that might emerge from our class discussions. Or you might find a new resource that we can add to the OER for your peers as well as future students of the class to read. Or we might decide to change the format or content of the book. The choice and the possibilities are for us to construct.



HABITS OF MIND

A **habit of mind** is a usual way of thinking, a way of engaging with the everyday world. The Habits of Mind that we focus on at PSU are:

- **purposeful communication**,
- **problem-solving**,
- **integrated perspective**, and
- **self-regulated learning**.

We will discuss throughout the semester the connections between the course activities and your development of the Habits of Mind.

Read more about each of the Habits of Mind from the Plymouth State University catalog.



CONNECTIONS TO NAEYC STANDARDS

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards for Professional Preparation Programs (revised 2010) are guiding standards for early childhood educator preparation programs. The importance of play in young children's learning and development is one of the major themes of the NAEYC Standards. Other significant NAEYC Position Statements, such as the Code of Ethical Conduct, also emphasize the essential role of play in young children's lives and the responsibility of early childhood educators to promote children's play.

Our Classroom Community

Building a supportive learning community will help us to deepen our understanding of children's play during early childhood. We will work together to create an environment that is respectful, encouraging, supportive, and open to all ideas. We all will be expected to demonstrate respect for each other, through our body language, words, attentiveness, punctuality, and courtesy.

Everyone in our learning community will take responsibility in sharing ideas informed by the course content. That means that each of us is responsible for being thoroughly prepared for class and actively engaged during class. Each individual person's questions, comments, and contributions to class discussions and project work supports their own and everyone else's learning. We will spend time at the beginning of the semester discussing what this might look like.



Quotes throughout this syllabus are from 50 Reasons to Believe in the Power of Play. Which quote resonates with you? Why?

Learning Community Engagement

There are many ways that you can thoughtfully engage in our learning community this semester. Below you will find a **starting list** of ways that you can engage. As a group, we can decide to add or modify this list as we build our learning community together.

- Participating in whole group and small group discussions during class sessions
- Engaging in play and reflecting about these experiences
- Using the course Teams to share your thinking
- Sharing feedback with your peers about their work
- What other ways do we want to engage in our learning community?

Rights of Learners

As we learn this semester, we will face challenges and sometimes be uncertain of the direction we might want to take. We want to keep in mind that as learners we have several rights as we try to grapple with complex work.

- The right to be confused.
- The right to claim a mistake.
- The right to speak, listen and be heard.
- The right to write, do, and represent only what makes sense.

Grades

This course follows the practice of ungrading. We will focus on using feedback to inform our work instead of grades. This feedback might come from me (your professor), your peers, or other people interested in young children's play. We will discuss how to use feedback to guide your understanding of play in early childhood. In addition, this feedback might inform the work you choose to complete to demonstrate your learning.

Throughout the semester, we will have conversations about learning and engagement in the course. We will talk about progress and what evidence of learning looks like. This information will help guide your thinking about how to share about your learning and engagement in your Self-Reflections.

Twice during the semester, you will complete a self-reflection related to your learning and engagement in the course. There are several purposes for these Self-Reflections. First, you will have the opportunity to consider what you have learned and how this new knowledge aligns to how you want to deepen your understanding of the course. Second, it gives you a chance to reflect on how you have taken an active role in learning by being engaged in the course. Third, you will have the opportunity to consider your development of the Habits of Mind. Finally, it gives you time to talk about your progress in the course and how the evidence provides support for your grade for the course.



Workload

The workload for this course will be manageable if you are organized and plan your time carefully. **Please to talk to me if you are having trouble understanding the material or keeping up with the workload.**

Participation in Class Sessions

As an important member of our learning community, you are expected to thoughtfully engage in our course. If you are unable to participate, contact me. Communicating with me early will allow me to support you as a learner. Please email me if you are unable to participate in our class activities as soon as possible.

It will be important for you to monitor your health not only for your well-being, but also for the well-being of your peers and professor. Please, if you feel unwell or feel that could have been exposed to COVID-19 or someone with symptoms of the virus, email me. We will come up with a plan for you to engage with the content that keeps our learning community safe.

Please review the PSU Attendance Policy, for more information.
https://coursecatalog.plymouth.edu/university-policies-procedures/

Face Coverings

To protect all members of our learning community, we will wear face coverings during our class time indoors. Bring a face covering to each class.

PLAY Choices

You will design a plan for your play and learning in the course. This work will focus on four elements. Early in the semester we will discuss the options you have for each of the areas listed below. This information will help you to create goals for your learning and identify how you will **PLAY** this semester.

Play Experience Journal (WECO)	Extend Your **L**earning	Be a Play **A**dvocate (WECO)	Capture **Y**oung Children's Play
• Play History* • Sensory/Art Play • Constructive Play • Games with Rules • Outside of Class Play Experiences	• Select resource from Engage More Sections in OER • Add high quality resource to OER • Engage in Twitter chat focused on play • Create another way to learn more	• Facilitate a Play Experience • Create a Play Plan • Develop a Toy Guide • Write a post for the course blog • Create another aay to advocate for play	• Observations of children you know • Observations of children in public spaces • Observations of children at the Center for Young Children & Families* • Video observations
How do you engage in play? Start by reflecting on your *Play History. Reflect at least 4 other times about your play this semester. (At least 3 from our in-class play experiences)	How would you like to extend your learning? Select at least 2 play topics to learn more about.	How can you advocate for play? Select at least 1 way to advocate for play this semester.	Where do you see children playing? Write at least 5 Play Snapshots. *Opportunities to observe at the Center will vary depending on availability. Contact Dr. Johnston if interested.

Self-Reflections & Feedback (WECO)
Several times during the semester you will take time to reflect on your learning and engagement as well as your development of the Habits of Mind. In addition, you will have opportunities to ask your peers for feedback that will inform how you proceed with your work for the course. We will discuss each of these experiences and how to approach this work. Below you will find a list of the opportunities you will have for reflection and feedback.

- Play Goals & Plan
- Reflections (2)
- Peer Feedback Sessions (2)
- Individual Conferences (2)



Pop-Up Play Event (WECO)
We will create a Pop-Up Play Event as part of the Showcase of Student Research and Engagement on April 27th. We will plan activities to engage the community in play experiences. As a class we will design the play experiences, the information we will share with the participants, and how we will engage the participants in play. We will develop the expectations and guidelines for this event and the corresponding reflection as we collaborate on creating the Pop-Up Play Event.

Basic Needs and Learning

College can be challenging to navigate, and it will be hard for you to learn if your basic needs aren't met--if you aren't getting good nutrition, or enough sleep, if you feel lonely or isolated, or if you're anxious about your living situation, finances, safety, resources, or other issues. During this pandemic, you want to make sure that you take care of yourself. Fortunately, **there are many people and resources on campus that can provide support.** Your academic advisor, your instructors, the Residential Life staff, Student Account Services, and many others can answer questions you have and help you find resources you need.

At **Frost House**, located on School Street, you'll find helpful resources in the Academic Student Advocate, CARE program, Director of Student Well-Being, and Title IX programs. You can reach the Frost House staff at 603-535-2206.

The Student Support Foundation (SSF) provides **short-term emergency financial assistance** and long-term student support. The Student Support Foundation also sponsors a **food pantry**. To learn more about the SSF and access the food pantry, contact the SSF advisor, at psu-ssf@plymouth.edu. Visit the Emergency Financial Assistance website or the Food Resource website to learn more about these resources.

Health Services is located at 12 Merrill Street (Mary Taylor House), across from Hyde Hall and next to Merrill Place Residence Hall. If you're not feeling well or need a prescription filled, contact Health Services at 603-535-2350 to schedule an appointment.

Free **counseling services** are available from the PSU Counseling Center, located near Hyde Hall (on the side away from the Hyde Hall parking lot). The building looks like a house and has a sign in the front lawn that says, "Plymouth State University Counseling Center." You can call the Center at 603-535-2461. Visit the website to learn about Telebehavioral Health counseling.

For more information about Academic, Financial, and Health and Safety Resources, check out the "Know and Utilize Your Resources" section of the PSU Student Success Guide.

If you're comfortable talking with me about your situation, please call, email, or stop by my office. I'll do what I can to help you find resources and support.



Other Policies You Should Know About

Accommodations to Support Learning

The PSU policy for academic accommodations is: "Plymouth State University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you should contact Campus Accessibility Services (CAS), located in Speare (535-3300) to determine whether you are eligible for such accommodations. Academic accommodations will only be considered for students who have registered with CAS."

If you have a Letter of Accommodation for this course from CAS, please provide me with that information [illegible] together. **Even if you aren't e[illegible]AS, please share your ideas ab[illegible]** For example, you might find it more conducive to learning if you sit in a particular spot, or you may benefit from having more time before being asked to respond to a question.

https://coursecatalog.plymouth.edu/university-policies-procedures/

Technology Resources

Plan to bring your laptop or tablet with you to class. If you don't have access to a laptop or tablet, you can check one out in Lamson Library.

If you need technology resources, you can check out laptops, cameras, and other equipment for free at Information Technology Services (ITS) in Lamson Library. ITS can be reached at 603-535-2929. Information about equipment loans is available here. If you need help using the various technology tools and software available on campus, or if you are experiencing problems with your personal technology devices (laptop, phone, tablet,) the Helpdesk is available 7 days a week at the main Information Desk in Lamson Library, by phone at 535-2929 or via email at helpdesk@plymouth.edu .

There are also several open computer labs on campus, including one in the basement of Rounds Hall, which also has a printer.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to abide by Plymouth State University's Academic Integrity policy. Presenting someone else's work as your own or without attribution is a violation of the University's Academic Integrity Policy, if you have any questions and/or need clarification, please ask. Please use this link to read the full policy https://coursecatalog.plymouth.edu/university-policies-procedures/

Fair Grading Policy

It is important that you understand the expectations for each assignment and the course. If you have any questions about your feedback, please talk with me. Please review the full policy https://coursecatalog.plymouth.edu/university-policies-procedures/